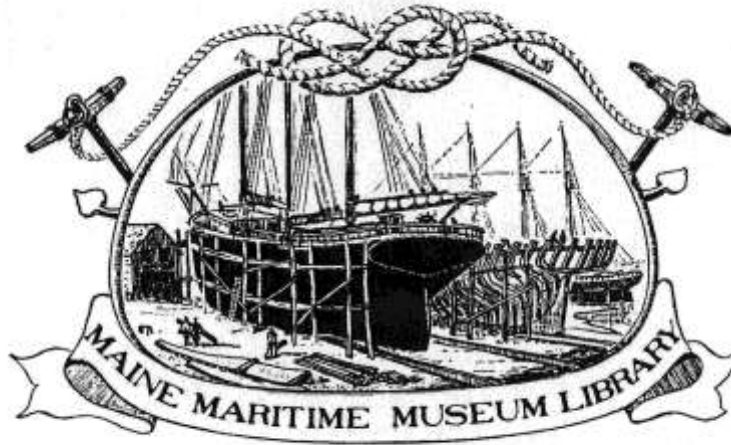


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**Inventory
for
Manuscript Collection
MS-457**

Captain Chauncey Silas Kelsey Papers
Inclusive dates 1864-1878

by
Nathan R. Lipfert

February 2012

Number of boxes: 1
Four manuscript volumes
Accession # 2006.087.01

A PART OF THE CAPTAIN W. J. LEWIS PARKER BEQUEST

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Abstract

Kelsey, Chauncey Silas, *Captain* (b 1827 –d 1904)

Papers, 1864-1878

One box

Master mariner from Clinton, Connecticut.

Diary kept by Kelsey during his time as a mate, with daily entries, financial accounts, Civil War references, personal remarks. Account book and two log-books relating to Kelsey's time as master and managing owner of the *Edward M. Reed* (Three-mast schooner). Account book contains vessel income and expenses, accounts of individual crew members, and a listing of store bills. Log-books contain abbreviated daily entries.

Bequeathed by Capt. W. J. Lewis Parker in 2006.

MS-457, Accession # 2006.087.01

Finding aid in repository; item level control.

Added Entries—Persons

Arnold, Daniel R., *Captain*

Lawrence, Charles, *Captain*

Parker, H., *Captain*

Parker, W. J. Lewis, *Captain*

Added entries—Corporate bodies (including vessels)

Decatur (Screw steamer)

Edward M. Reed (Three-mast schooner)

Forest Oak (Three-mast schooner)

John Sherwood (Brig)

Mira A. Pratt (Schooner)

Sarah A. Reed (Schooner)

W. & B. Douglas (Schooner)

Added entries—Places

New Haven (CT)

Connecticut River

Added entries—Key terms

Ship captains

Shipping

Schooners

United States—History—Civil War, 1861-1865

Acquisition

The papers of Captain Chauncey S. Kelsey were bequeathed to Maine Maritime Museum from the estate of Capt. W. J. Lewis Parker in November and December 2006.

Provenance

Capt. Lewis Parker picked up many of his maritime papers through dealers, auctions, estate sales or relatives of past maritime figures. Nevertheless, I cannot find any documentation

on how he acquired these papers other than that they were part of his maritime collection that he bequeathed to the museum.

Restrictions

There are no restrictions on the use of these materials for study or research.

Physical Condition

Other than the usual surface dirt and minor tears, the manuscripts in this collection are in good condition. Overall, the papers of Captain Chauncey S. Kelsey are in good condition.

Biographical Notes

Captain Chauncey Silas Kelsey was born in Killingworth, Connecticut, in 1827, the son of Samuel Kelsey, farmer, and Hannah Wright. He was the eleventh of their twelve children, according to the records prepared by a descendent on Ancestry.com (2012). He appears to have resided in Clinton, CT most of his life. Captain Kelsey married Mabel Stannard in Clinton in 1852. They had six children whose names are known: Lucy Maria, Hester Chapman, Alden Pardee, Hannah Wright, Annie Rebecca, and Mabel Winnefred Kelsey. Hester and Alden did not survive into adulthood. In the 1900 census, Mabel is recorded as being the mother of 10 children, 5 of whom were alive.

In the 1850 census, Chauncey is recorded as a sailor, with his place of residence listed as still his parents' home. His brother George A. Kelsey, also still at home, was also a sailor. There was a Captain George L. Kelsey, also of Clinton, CT, whose father was lost at sea, so there may have been a number of family members in nautical professions.

Chauncey Kelsey is listed in the 1860 census as a mariner, and in the 1870 census as a seaman. He is not found in the 1880 census, and in 1900, aged 73, is listed as a day laborer, presumably retired from the sea. At the time of the 1900 census, the Kelseys had been married 49 years.

In 1875, Kelsey became master of the three-mast schooner (tern schooner) *Edward M. Reed*, completed in November that year at the W. O. Nettleton shipyard in East Haven CT. He was also the managing owner of the vessel; the owners were listed as "C. S. Kelsey and Others," and the hailing port was New Haven. The schooner was a centerboard vessel, measuring 421 gross tons, with a registered length of 133.6 feet. These manuscripts document Kelsey's command of the vessel into 1878, but he likely commanded her for some time after that. *American Lloyds* and *Record of American & Foreign Shipping* do not agree on when he relinquished command of that vessel, but it may have been about 1881. Kelsey remained the owner of record, however, until about 1898. The schooner was wrecked in September or October of 1898, soon after ownership went to Magnus Manson, also of New Haven. Kelsey does not appear to have been the managing owner or the master of other vessels.

Chauncey S. Kelsey died at Killingworth CT in 1904. His wife Mabel had died in 1903.

Scope and Content Notes

The papers consist of: a diary or journal (Volume A) kept by Kelsey during his time as a mate, with daily entries, financial accounts, Civil War references, personal remarks, and an account book (Volume B) and two log-books (Volumes C and D) relating to Kelsey's time as master and managing owner of the *Edward M. Reed* (Three-mast schooner). The account book contains vessel income and expenses, accounts of individual crew members, and a listing of store bills. Log-books contain abbreviated daily entries.

Volume A: Journal, 1864-1874

12 inches high, circa 120 pages, bound volume with lined pages, majority is daily entries of six or seven lines, also many shorter comments, a few longer entries of a page or more, and some pages converted to financial accounts with income and personal expenses. C. S. Kelsey is the author of all, and calls himself the mate of several of the vessels mentioned. Many personal comments, some about captains. Vessels covered are listed below.

John Sherwood (Brig), 417 tons, B. S. Smith, master, of New York, new, flush deck, 1864 voyage New York to New Orleans and return, rescued crew of bark *John Winthrop*.

Decatur (Screw steamer), 337 tons, of Delaware City, 1864 Army (Civil War) transport for soldiers, horses, mules, and other things, mostly to and from various forts in the Washington DC area; collision with US transport *Starlight*.

Warrior (Sidewheel steamer), but which of this name is not known, 1864

Doris (Screw steamer) of Providence, 1360 tons, probably 1865.

James T. Brady (Sidewheel steamer), 1402 tons, of New York, 1867 collision.

W. & B. Douglass (Schooner) of Middletown CT, 200tons, 1867-1868, Captain Charles Lawrence, several voyages between New York and Corpus Christi TX, general cargo, comment about the captain, also about former Confederates and Texas in general, Kelsey was mate "or Something Ells."

Sarah A. Reed (Schooner) of Portland CT, 161 new tons, 1869-1871, Captain Daniel R. Arnold, several of her cargoes are stone from the Connecticut River, ports of call include Petersburg VA, Albany, Baltimore, Hartford, Saco, Bangor and New Orleans.

David Currie (Schooner) of Portland CT, 171 tons, 1869, lumber cargo, Jacksonville FL.

F. G. Russell (Schooner) of Portland CT, 173 tons, 1869.

Margaret & Lucy (Three-mast schooner) of Middletown CT, 412 tons, 1871.

Breeze (Schooner) of Brookhaven NY, 254 tons, 1871.

Mira A. Pratt (Schooner) of Middletown CT, 149 tons, 1871, cargoes of stone and coal.

Forest Oak (Three-mast schooner) of New Haven CT, 326 tons, 1871-1874, Captain H. Parker, coal cargoes, thieves stole some of Kelsey's clothes.

This volume contained a bill of exchange, second, \$694.46 from Charles Tift to William Belsworth of New Haven, 1868, evidently carried from Key West to New Haven by C. S. Kelsey. It has been removed to a separate folder, kept with this collection.

Volume B: Account Book, 1875-1878

Account book for *Edward M. Reed* (Three-mast schooner), Chauncey S. Kelsey, Master. 12 ½" high, circa 100 pages with manuscript notations in bound volume with printed lines for accounting or ledger purposes. Contains full income and expense details for the schooner from January 3 to November 16, 1876. Also contains accounts for individual crew

members from 1876 through 1878, with full details of dates served, wages, advances, etc. Also contains a list of the vessel's store bills from December 5, 1875 to September 30, 1878.

The vessel's income and expense accounts show the financial details of each voyage and generally mention the cargoes, but do not record the ports of call. An accompanying page of notes by the donor, Capt. Parker, indicates the ports, voyage by voyage. He presumably tracked the vessel in the New York Maritime Register.

This volume is also accompanied by an 1878 note from Chas. W. Allan, Chief of Police (New Haven?) regarding the money due Emmanuel Johnson, "formerly of your vessel." Presumably the Manuel Johnson recorded on page 112 (where the note was found) as having deserted.

These accompanying loose pages are in a separate folder, with the account book in this collection.

Volume C: Log-book, 1875-1877

Log for *Edward M. Reed* (Three-mast schooner), Chauncey S. Kelsey, Master. 15 ½" high, circa 72 pages with manuscript notations in bound volume with printed log-book form; however, log-book form not followed. Kelsey records nearly a week on each page, instead of the two days of the form. The notations are similar to the ones from his earlier diary; there are no hourly records of wind direction, course, speed, and few mentions of sail handling. However, in contrast with his earlier diary, there are also no personal remarks, and no mention of any other person aboard the schooner. It is all weather, bearings, distances, loading and discharging, arriving and departing.

The log begins December 13, 1875 at New Haven, and ends December 1, 1877, bound from Bridgeport towards Baltimore. All voyages are between ports in the Middle Atlantic states (Baltimore mostly, but also Richmond and Philadelphia) and ports in New England, often New Haven.

Volume D: Log-book, 1878

Log for *Edward M. Reed* (Three-mast schooner), Chauncey S. Kelsey, Master. 15 ½" high, circa 15 pages with manuscript notations (more than 100 pages blank) in bound volume with printed log-book form. The description above of the notations in Volume C holds true for this log as well, except for one mention of crew. On September 28th, he notes "all hands implored repairing sails"; the jib and foresail had split the day before.

This log begins June 22, 1878 at Boston, and ends October 9, 1878 at New Haven. It primarily records a number of voyages between Baltimore and New Haven. The entries cut off abruptly upon the last arrival at New Haven, with no further remarks or notes.